

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the bolded title on page 1, lines 1-2, with the following unbolded title:

~~**METHOD OF CARDINALITY ESTIMATION USING STATISTICAL SOFT CONSTRAINTS**~~ METHOD OF CARDINALITY ESTIMATION USING STATISTICAL SOFT CONSTRAINTS

Please replace the bolded header on page 1, line 4, with the following unbolded header:

~~**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**~~ FIELD OF THE INVENTION

Please replace the bolded header on page 1, line 9, with the following unbolded header:

~~**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**~~ BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please replace the bolded header on page 4, line 16, with the following unbolded header:

~~**BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**~~ BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Please replace the bolded header on page 6, line 1, with the following unbolded header:

~~**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**~~ BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please replace the bolded header on page 6, line 9, with the following unbolded header:

~~**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**~~ DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Please replace the bolded header on page 17, line 1, with the following unbolded header:

~~**CLAIMS**~~ CLAIMS

Please replace the bolded header on page 24, line 1, with the following unbolded header:

~~**ABSTRACT**~~ ABSTRACT

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 8 with the following paragraph:

When a complex query involves multi-column ~~predietates~~ predicates, it is difficult to estimate cardinality without having some knowledge about the relationship between the columns. For example, if a table contained a column for start date and a column for end date, a query may be made to find the number of projects active on a given day. The predicate that could be used is "WHERE START_DATE <= '1995-08-30' AND END_DATE >= '1995-08-30'". One technique used is to treat the columns independently and multiply the selectivities of the individual predicates. If it were known that 1995-08-30 was approximately in the middle of the column of values that spanned 10 years of data, each predicate would have a selectivity of about 50%. In other words, it would be true for half of the rows that the START_DATE is less than or equal to 1995-08-30 and it would be true for half of the rows that the END_DATE is greater than 1995-08-30. This would lead to a combined estimate of 25% of all projects started over the ten year period having been active on the date 1995-08-30. If projects rarely lasted more than a month, then this estimate would be far too high. If projects typically lasted five or more years, then perhaps the estimate would be too low. Without knowing more information about the relationship between the START_DATE and the END_DATE, we cannot accurately estimate the cardinality of multiple predicates on different columns.